

some personal thoughts
on
Muslim-Christian
Dialogue

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Green Mountain, Virginia



New Moon
1 Muḥarram 1416 Hijri
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Abstract:

There are certain basic issues between Muslims and Christians that have proven to be sticking points for some 1400 years.

For Muslims these sticking points are basic doctrinal questions generated by 1) the Incarnation and Passion of Jesus and 2) the Trinity .

For post-Vatican II Christians who have accepted that there is salvation outside the Christian faith and that Muslims are believers it would seem that two main questions remain. 1) Given that Christians accept Old Testament prophets can Muḥammad, peace and blessings be upon him, now be accepted as a Prophet and 2) is the Qur'ān *ipsissima verba*, the Word of God, or is it the human sayings of a man or an amalgam of the early Muslim community?

The writer does not believe at present these questions have answers and suggests that rather than concentrating on our differences we, in accord with the Qur'ānic prescription "vie with each other in good works," {3:114} because "surely whoever surrenders his whole self to Allāh and is sincere, his reward is with his Lord and no fear shall be upon him nor shall he grieve." {2:112}, should engage each other at the level of righteous deeds and continue in our mutual commitment to struggle against the rising tide of inversion, ignorance and oppression which everywhere confronts believers living in the present world.

By way of domain the writer cites the self, the family, the neighbour and the community as likely and accessible spheres for 'good works' which might be reasonably expected to yield fruit, *ʾinshāʾillāh*.





some thoughts on Muslim-Christian dialogue

Praise be to Allāh, Lord of all the worlds who, through His Eternal Word, does not cease to be praised: The Compassionate, The Mercy Full, Who by His Mercy has stirred up within us gratitude for His goodness wherewith He has enriched us and inspired us to praise and glorify Him.

The limits of favour and the bounds of praise were extended when He promised to those grateful for His bounty still more blessings; and He spread wide the carpet of His Assembly to those who remember Him. He has brought into subjection all things according to His Wisdom and Equity, as He has willed, by His Power, so that by His Authority the mover remains still and the still moves. The Controller of expansion {*baṣṭ*} and contraction {*qabḍ*}, 'The Knower of the Unseen {*al-ghayb*}; not even the weight of an atom, or less than that or greater than that, either in the heavens or on the earth escapes Him.' {34:3} 'He is the First and the Last, The Outer and the Inner,' {*al-ʿawālu wa-l-ʾākḥīru wa-ḍḍāḥīru wa-l-bātin*} {57:3}

We praise Him with the praise of those who know Him with true knowledge of Him. We give thanks to Him with the expressions of gratitude of those who acknowledge the perfection of His goodness and favour. We bear witness that there is no deity other than Allāh alone, having no companion, with an affirmation to which no doubt is attached and before which no door closes from accepting. We testify that in speaking of human perfection that we speak first of our liege-lord Muḥammad, the Perfect Worshipper {*ʿabdu-l-llāh*}, His Slave and Prophet and Messenger chosen from the mine of pure nobility, selected from a family of honour. Allāh bless and save him, with a blessing that will bring us to him and gather us around him on the Day of Assembly and Reckoning. May Allāh be pleased with his family, his helpers, his descendants, the people of his household, his illustrious companions, the best of friends, as long as a star will shine, the moon shall rise and a cloud shall float above the face of the earth.

By praising the Prophet I also simultaneously praise all the Prophets and Messengers, blessings of Allāh and peace be upon them, for, as I bear witness that Muḥammad is the Prophet and Messenger of Allāh so do I bear witness that there are upwards to some 124,000 Prophets that Allāh has sent to the people of the world and from these I bear witness to the Prophethood {nubuwa} of Adam, Idris, Nūḥ, Hud, Salih, Lūṭ, ʿIbrāhīm, Ismaʿīl, Ishāq, Yaʿqūb, Yūsuf, Shuʿayb, Hārūn, Mūsā, Dawūd, Sulaymān, Ayyub, Dhū-l-Kifl, Yunus, Ilyās, al-Yasaʿ, Zakarriyah, Yahya, and ʿIsā who are all related.

And of these I bear witness, knowing that Allāh has reputedly sent more than 104 Divinely Revealed Books, that Allāh sent the Torah to Mūsā, The Zabūr to Dawūd, The ʿInjil to ʿIsā and the Qurʾān to Muḥammad specifically for the purpose of promulgating the Divine Law {sharīʿah} that regulates the transactional basis {dīn} of life between the self {nafs} and Allāh and the self and all the other selves {an-nās, al-jān, al-malāʾikah} that exist in the world, with great attention to the relationships that exist between members of families, communities, tribes, nations and people of other religious communities and specifically among the People of the Book including Jews, Sabians and Christians.

I bear witness that, as the Prophet Muḥammad is the Seal of all the Prophets {khātama-n-nabiyyīn} {Q33:40}, just so the Qurʾān is the Final Testament in accord with the last āyat in the Revelation {nuzūl} which says specifically {in translation}, “This day I have completed for you {akmāltu lakum} your religion and completed my favour on you and have chosen for you the surrender {al-ʾIslām} as your religion.” {Q5:3}.

As a Muslim, ʾinshāʾllāh, I take note that Allāh has devoted more than 1,300¹ verses {āyāt} in al-Qurʾān to speaking of other prophets and messengers, peace be upon them all, as well as earlier revelations and other religions. My understanding is only in accord with what Allāh has said. What may or may not be true in any other earlier Revelation is not a matter upon which I speculate. To the degree that Allāh confirms “that which was revealed before you,” {Q2:4} I accept the content of earlier Revelation. When there appears to be a discrepancy between what I find in Qurʾān and earlier Revelation I accept what Allāh has said by way of verification, mindful that there have been among people those who “listened to the Word of Allāh and then used to change it, after they had knowingly understood it,” {Q2:75} I fear the saying of Allāh, “Woe to those who write the Book with their own hands and say, ‘this is from Allāh.’” {Q2:79}

¹Out of 6,247 or nearly one fifth of the Qurʾān

I am, I suppose you might say, a Unitarian {muwahḥid} as are all Muslims, and as such I reject at every level, and in all dimensions, any possibility of duality or trinity {ṭhalith} and any possibility of any form of incarnation {ḥulūl}, of hypostasis {uqnūm} with, Allāh who is One without number

As this is a paper which is specifically being written for a conference dealing with the “problems and challenges of Muslim-Christian dialogue,” I wish to make my own position clear from the beginning and so spare the reader any possible doctrinal or sentimental mis-understanding.

In terms of the “problems” of Muslim-Christian dialogue I do not believe there is anything much to be gained by discussion of the issue of what is sometimes called Christology, as it does not seem possible that Christians and Muslims can ever come to any common understanding on this issue without compromising the very basis of our differing belief {‘aqīdah}. Equally I have little hope that any discussion that centres around the assumed Passion of Christ, and specifically the question of crucifixion and vicarious salvation, will yield any new understanding. Surely by now we have learned this over the past 1400 years of our dialogue.

I would also say that, after many years of deeply considering the issue, I have come to believe that the Prophet and Messenger that we, as Muslims, know as ‘Isā, peace be upon him, bears only a passing resemblance to the Jesus of Christian doctrine. I accept this as so without any attempt to reconcile the Jesus of Christianity to ‘Isā, peace be upon him, for if they were to be truly reconciled there would no longer be the need for anything called “Christianity” as such. This is in accord the Words of Allāh.

﴿قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ
أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا
وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ﴾

QUL YĀĀ’ AHLA-LKITĀBITA’ĀLAW ʾILĀ KALIMATIN SAW’ĀʾI BAYNANĀ WA BAYNAKUM:
ʾALLĀ NA BUDA ʾILLĀ-LLĀHA WA LĀ NUSHRIKA BIHI SHĀY’AŅ
WA LĀ YATAKHIDHĀ BA’ADUNĀ BA’DAN ʾARBĀBAM-MIN DŪNI-LLĀH

Oh People of the Book
Come to an agreement between us and you
that we shall worship none but Allāh and ascribe no partner to Him
and none of us shall take as lords other than Allāh.

I should also say, that in as much as I see an unbridgeable gap between the Christian notion of Jesus and the Prophet ‘Isā, peace be upon him, I also see an even more daunting gap between what is variously meant or has been understood over the past millennium by the term God {Θεός} and Allāh.

God, which can also be spelled god and which yields such derivatives as goddess, goddesses and gods, is simply not the same at all as Allāh, which has neither root nor derivative. Even in the Era of Ignorance {jahiliyyah} when the dwellers in the Arabian Peninsula in general, and Makkah in particular, had forgotten the teachings of the great Muslim ḥanīf, ʾIbrāhīm, peace be upon him, and had fallen into idolatry, superstition, fortune telling and magic, the Name —Allāh— never changed its meaning nor was anything ever associated with that Name which remained inviolable and to itself and signified the One without an other.

In the thirty years since the Second Vatican Conference {Vatican II} declared that,

God's saving will also embraces those who acknowledge the Creator, and among them especially the Muslims, who profess the faith of Abraham and together with us adore the one God, the Merciful One, who will judge men on the Last Day. {Article 16}

and despite calls of various, mainly Christian, orientalist for greater understanding and or even, in the case of Dr. L. Massignon's call many years in the past, for a "spiritual Copernican revolution," there remain fundamental differences between Muslims and Christians that cannot be truly bridged, no matter what the talk of "paradigm shifts", without either Christianity losing its doctrinal relevance or ʾIslām yielding what can never be yielded if ʾIslām is to continue as it was Revealed.

For in as much as dialogue falls apart over the issue of Incarnation from the side of Christians, it would seem, and I trust I am not being presumptuous, that, having accepted, at least in the light of post Vatican II, that there is grace outside of Christianity as there is salvation, and having admitted, at least in the realm of possibility, that if, as a Christian, one was prepared to accept Judaic prophets as having been relayers of the Word of God, nothing really stands in the way of Christians accepting the Arabic prophet.

Having then accepted that Muslims *together with us adore the one God* and they do so because they received a message from a prophet then, consequentially, what can the Qurʾān be but the Word of God? The only question left is whether it is *ipsissima verba* or the human word of a prophet?

On the issue of the Divine Revelation of the Qurʾān there is no possibility of any other understanding for that is a basis of our belief is the Incarnation, at whatever level, a basis for Christian belief. Muslims can never give way for if we were to accept, say through a process akin to historical criticism, that the Qurʾān was not the True Word of Allāh but that, somehow, it was a ‘message’ filtered either through the Prophet, blessings of Allāh and peace be upon him, or filtered through the early community as some Orientalists¹ have sought to prove, then we have lost a fundamental basis of our belief and we would be lost on the same sea of relativism that modern Christianity seems to find itself — apparently unsure of what or whom to believe in.

There is of course a lot to be said for swimming in the sea of not-knowing. I have been assured that not-knowing increases one’s faith no end and that one need not think, say, about how exactly the Trinity actually works and instead concentrate on the One True God and — simply worship the obvious.

But — rather than rush time — seeking a solution that cannot exist I would prefer to accept the present as it is and merely point to the gap.

For us the Word of God is the oral revelation that was transmitted by the Angel Jibrīl, peace be upon him, to the Prophet Muḥammad, blessings of Allāh and peace be upon him, over a period of twenty-three years.

During the entire time in which the revelation took place it was continually being written down in order {ratib}. After the death of the Prophet, blessings of Allāh and peace be upon him, this writing was entrusted to his wife Ḥafṣah, may Allāh be content with her. It was this copy that was sent to the third Kḫalīf, Uṭḥmān on the urgings of the second Kḫalīf, ‘Umar to the first Kḫalīf, Abu Bakr, may Allāh have mercy on them. Within twenty five years there were four complete and precise copies of the original in existence made by the most trusted of the Companions, Allāh have mercy on them. These copies were sent out in the four directions and the fifth remained in Madinah. The Kḫalīf ‘Alī also made a copy himself. I personally have seen with my own eyes the hand-written copies of Uṭḥmān and ‘Alī, may Allāh have mercy on them. There is no difference between those copies and any modern edition save in the addition of certain diacritical marks which aid in reading {for the Command is to “Read” {96:1}. Thus reciting in the present is to recreate the original sonorous revelation which is, by way of metaphor, *the Holy Sacrament of the Muslim* for when he or she reads, the Word of Allāh is always newly alive in one’s being and on one’s tongue.

¹from the 1800’s with Geiger and Hirschfeld to the late 1900’s with Wansborough and or even Neuwirth

Revelation *is* not was and so the Qurʾān is many things for those who read it such as Remembrance {dhikr}, Guidance {hudā}, Healing {shifā}, Mercy {rahmah}, Blessed {mubārak} as well as Generous {karīm} and ultimately our only means of discrimination {furqān}.

In truth I could not really be a Muslim and have any other view just as if you are to be a Christian then Jesus the Christ can be, for you, no less than the Word of God. Given this and considering the reality of the times in which we find ourselves to be, it would appear to me that our best possible course is to leave discussion of all of that behind and agree to disagree if you like. For Muslims this is possible in accord with the saying of Allāh,

﴿لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ﴾

LAKUM DĪNUKUM WALIĀDĪN:

To you your religion and to me my religion.
{109:6}

and in accord with

﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ﴾

LAĀĀ ʾIKRĀHA FĪ-D-DĪN: QAT-TABAYYANA-R-RUSHḍU MINA-L-GḥAYY

There is no coercion in religion, the truth stands clear from the false
{2:256}

Having left behind our disagreements, we are free to find many areas such as the belief in Allāh or if you like ‘God’ {given that each of us, in reality {ḥaqiqah} have quite different understandings of what that might or might not Be}, the belief in angels, the belief in scriptures, the belief in prophets and, of great possible significance in the present world, the belief that each of us is ultimately accountable to Allāh or God on the Day of Judgment.

﴿أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمَ الْحَكَمِينَ﴾

ʾALAYSA-LLĀHU BPAḤKAMI-L-HĀKIMĪN

Is not Allāh the most Just of Judges?
{95:8}

My suggestion for fruitful work together stems from the Word of Allāh {by way of its meaning}, “They are not all alike. Of the People of the Book there

is a staunch community who recite the Signs of Allāh in the night and prostrate themselves. They believe in God and the Last Day and they enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong and they vie with one another in performing good deeds; and these are among the righteous. Whatever good they do they shall never be denied the reward of having done so for Allāh has full knowledge of those who consciously guard themselves for Allāh.” {3:114}

﴿بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ
فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾

BALĀ : MAN ḐASLAMA WAJHAHŪ LI-LLAHI WA HUWA MUḤSINŪN
FALAHŪ ḐAJRUHŪ ḐINDA RABBIHI
WA LĀ KHĀWFUN ḐALAYHIM WA LĀ HUM YAHZANŪN

Surely. Whoever surrenders his whole self to Allāh and is sincere
his reward is with his Lord
and no fear shall be upon him nor shall he grieve.
{2:112}

Surely this leads us to a great mutual certainty. Let us leave Allāh to judge between us and take to heart the injunction:

﴿يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ﴾

YUSĀRIḐŪNA FĪ-L-KHĀYRĀT

vie together in good works
{3:114}

For this writer the above represents the best possible, and most productive, way for us to relate with each other as members of different faith groups.

Just as both the Old Testament and the New Testament contain ample directions for Jews and Christians so Muslims find that Qurʾān and the Wisdom Sayings {ḥadīth} of the Prophet, blessings of Allāh and peace be upon him, provide us with a complete program of good works {khayrāt}.

﴿وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ﴾

WA BASHḐIRIL-LADḐĪNA ḐĀMANŪ WA ḐAMILŪ-Ḑ-ḐĀLIḐĀT

and give good news to those who believe and perform righteous deeds
{2:25}

From a Muslim perspective there is no belief {ʾīmān} without action {ʿamal}. Belief without action is at, the very least, casuistry and, perhaps, at a deeper level it is utter hypocrisy. Surely belief without action can only be seen as a failure to honour our covenant here on earth as worshipful slaves {ʿabd} and representatives {khulafāʾ} of Allāh.

This conjunction — marriage — of belief and action, ʾāmanū wa ʿamilū, is a oft recurrent pairing in the Qurʾān from Q2:25 to Q103:3.

We trust that our Christian interlocutors have long since put behind them any idea that because we, as Muslims, understand at the deepest level that everything and every minute is being determined by Allāh that necessarily we understand that to mean that we, as humans, are simply, “helpless tools of an arbitrary God” or that ours is a fatalistic faith.

As Josef van Ess in an article *Islamic Perspectives* succinctly put it from the Christian perspective, “I believe....Judeo-Christian and Islamic theology {could agree} on two major points.

- The world is governed not by blind chance or obscure destiny but by the gracious and merciful God. Creation and conservation, presence and judgment, are expressions of his freely granted compassion.
- God’s absolute freedom does not threaten man’s relative freedom, but makes it possible and powerful. In this sense, the Infinite represents not the far limit of the finite, but its enablement and fulfillment.”

In a sense it is this very understanding that lies behind the idea of jihād, another misunderstood dimension of ʾIslām.

Jihād as struggle or combat both internal, in the sense of the struggle with one’s own self or the greater jihād {jihādu-l-ʾakbar}, and the lesser jihād {jihādu-l-ʾasghar} which must be the outer struggle against all forces of oppression {ḍḥulm} which threaten one’s capacity for worship and life.

Externally or internally {ḍḥāhiri ʾaw bāʾini} this combat is, at least from this writer’s perspective, the greatest of the good works and deeds of true righteousness, for it touches on the very most basic issue of the struggle between Inspired Consciousness {taqwā} and ignorance {jah} which is synonymous with oppression {ḍḥulm} — an oppression which begins with the self.

﴿رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي﴾

RABBI INNĪ ḌḤALAMTU NAFSĪ

our Lord, truly I have oppressed my self

{27:44}

In our vying with one another in performing righteous deeds can there be a better or more available place for either of us to start than with our 'own' selves? Is it not in our own selves that the struggle {jihād} between inspired awareness of Allāh {taqwā} and ignorance {jahl} is so clearly visible?

There is a phrase from a pop song momentarily in vogue at some point during the past thirty years that goes, "It starts out with your family and later comes round to your soul." With apologies to the song-writer and singer I would suggest that it might be more correctly phrased as, "It starts out with your soul {nafs} and later comes round to your family."

If one accepts the the full implications within the conjunction — the marriage — of belief and action, *ʿāmanū wa ʿamilu* and is fully aware that

- The world is governed not by blind chance or obscure destiny but by the gracious and merciful God. Creation and conservation, presence and judgment, are expressions of his freely granted compassion.
- God's absolute freedom does not threaten man's relative freedom, but makes it possible and powerful. In this sense, the Infinite represents not the far limit of the finite, but its enablement and fulfillment."

then surely it follows that part of that enablement and fulfillment in one's own being is an ecstatic freedom that results from the alignment of one's self to the dynamics of Being. If one can align one's self, and especially do so in partnership with one's mate, who is also motivated by the same Inspired Consciousness, then the very next step is to work for the alignment, or perhaps harmonisation might be a better word, of one's whole family

In the world in which we presently find our selves this is a formidable task.

Let me just digress to clarify my use above of the word *Being*.

God, or Allāh to give That which we speak of its proper Name, is not some *body* any more than Allāh or God is any *thing*. I would rather not get caught up in a long ontological discussion and perhaps it will suffice to say that, from a certain perspective, Allāh is Being. In as much as Being permeates and penetrates every atom of being the particle, as such, is the form of the wave momentarily manifest. This permeation and penetration is not that of some *thing* but rather it is precisely mercy {rahmah} and utter compassion {rahīm}, the ground of all being, which animates {rūh} or spiritualises {rūḥ} all that which is, or at least that of which we can experience, bearing always in mind that it is we who are limited, contingent and it is That which is Allah that is unlimited and everywhere self established. Allāh remains both beyond all form and simultaneously that which inspires {bi-rawaḥ} all form.

One either lives one's life unconscious of this Being and remains ignorant {jahī} or, through action {ʿamal} or grace {barakah}, by wayfaring {sulūk} or through attraction {jadhb}, ignorance is overcome, momentarily or constantly, and one is blessed by the vision of the Ultimate Interconnected Unicity of All That Is or Can Be — the only Wave that Is.

Perhaps there is the responsibility of some kind of abstract belief in Being but it is very difficult to be motivated by abstraction. Experience {ḍhawq} on the other hand is a strong motivator which is, perhaps, what part of the meaning of the command to, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and all else shall be added unto you." {Luke 12:31}

Rather than digress further down what is, for this writer, a very seductive direction, let me return to my central idea of our vying with one another in good works.

If one proceeds from within to without along the lines I am suggesting then, inevitably, one begins with the self and the mate and then the family and, if one is very successful — the community.

If you can accept that personal experience {ḍhawq} or certainty {yaqīn} is required if one is truly to be inspired and motivated in the great struggle against all forms of oppression — the combat for the Angel on the part of the Faithful Lovers — as some refer to jihād, then it follows that the holy warrior {mujahid} must be somebody who has seen the true nature of Being and having seen, must be accounted as a witness {shahīd}. The witness can, in view of what they have seen, never be content with ignorance and oppression. Not incidentally {shahīd} is the same word for martyr in Arabic,

And if one cannot accept ignorance and oppression as any kind of alternative for one's self and one's family then one must also struggle to bring an end to ignorance and oppression in one's community. Ultimately, perhaps, for the believer {mu'min} our vying in good works is a struggle on behalf of "all sentient beings", as Gotama, a buddha, phrased it, though here we must be very careful of entertaining hubris and its mate, pride {kibr}.

The Prophet, blessings of Allāh and peace be upon him, said, "No man can be called a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." which is not far off the command of Jesus to, "love your neighbor as your self." {Matthew 19:19}"

I am drawn to observe that the term *neighbor* and *brother* suggest that, in both cases, these are not abstract 'others' but those closest to us for, again according to ḥadīth, "the believers are all brothers to one another."

One's neighbour is known as is one's brother. I mention hubris and pride in terms of larger missions for it seems, at least such has been my experience, that the wider the web or net is stretched, the more prone we become to leaving the human particular in favour of the inhuman abstraction which can lead to a kind of spiritual fascism which, I believe, is at the root of most fundamentalist movements in the world today.

Neighbours and brothers, as well as sisters, tend to be spirit, flesh and blood and so less susceptible to abstraction. One's brothers and sisters live in one's house. The neighbour lives next door — a human not unlike one's own self.

Allāh, on the lips of the Prophet, blessings and peace be upon him, said, in what is known as Ḥadīṭh Qudṣī, "Know that no one with even an atom {ḍharrah} of pride shall enter the Garden of Paradise."

This saying frightens me. Pride is so subtle. Thus, in imagining possible spheres, I prefer to take care of pride and hubris by working in a milieu where it is just barely possible that one might succeed in one's efforts to work goodness. For my own self, as I have tried to make clear, this means my self, my family and my neighbours. Beyond that is both the immediate and wider community in which I live and work. This includes, because I am also a teacher, a wider faith community. Beyond that I don't know. At night I walk in the fields and look at the stars. Now at the time of the new moon the sky is dark. The stars blaze forth fiercely against deep velvet. The world is filled with people. Like the stars, who can count them but Allāh.

Lao-Tzu spoke of it this way, "No need to leave your door to know the whole world. No need to peer through your windows to know the Way of Heaven. Therefore the wise one knows without going, names without seeing and completes without doing." {T47}

﴿يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ﴾
 ﴿ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً﴾
 ﴿فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي﴾ ﴿وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي﴾

YĀĀ'AYATUHĀ-N-NAFSU-L-MUTMA'INNAH •
 'IRJII'ILĀ RABBIKI RĀDIYATAM-MARDIYYAH •
 FA-D-KHULĪ FI 'IBĀDI • WA-D-KHULĪ JANNATI

Oh you whose self is become at peace
 return to your Lord pleased and well pleasing.
 So enter with my worshipful slaves — enter My Garden.

Much as it may amaze some people Allāh has told us that we were created solely for the purpose of worshipping Allāh. I return to my beginning

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾

WA MĀ KhĀLAQĀTU-L-JINNA WA-L-'INSA 'ILLA LI-YA'BUDŪN •

I have not created the Jinn or People except that they worship Me
{51:56}

And from that beginning I reach my end. So far as to “how” we are to continue our ‘dialogue’ I would suggest we let it be something benign like vying with one another in good works and leaving it to Allāh to judge on the basis of “whoever surrenders his whole self to Allāh and is sincere, his reward is with his Lord, no fear shall be upon him nor shall he be grieved.” {2:112}

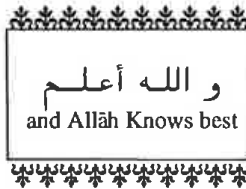
I have found the following ayat to be of great meaning in my understanding of how to proceed in life. Perhaps you will also find it useful:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يَغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ﴾

'INNA-LLĀHA LĀ YUGĥAYYIRU MĀ BI-QŌWMI
HATTA YUGĥAYYIRŪ MĀ BI-'ANFUSIHIM •

Allāh does not change what is in a people until they change what is in them selves.
{13:11}

I thank Allāh for having had this opportunity to speak to you, the reader, and I hope my words have made your life better and not worse. Any mistakes you may find are my own and I apologise for them.



من الفقير إلى ربه والغني دائم بفضلہ و نعمہ

ن

by one who is poor before his Lord and endlessly enriched by His Bounty
‘Abdullāh Noorudeen Durkee

02 Muḥarram 1416 Hijri 31 May 1995 Miladi,
Green Mountain, Virginia



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